

**MIDDLE ATLANTIC  
Region 1  
HHS-N-276-2011-00003-C  
Hazelwood YMCA 2012 Winter Workshop Series  
Hazelwood YMCA  
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## **Executive Summary**

The primary goals for this project were:

- To increase participants' knowledge of basic nutritional principles and healthy meal recipes through participation in the Nutritional Literacy for You and Your Family and the Balanced Family-Friendly Meal Options workshop sessions.
- To improve participants' knowledge of family-oriented exercise and workout options through participation in the Family Workouts workshop session.
- To increase participants' knowledge of first aid and CPR procedures through participation in the Child and Adult CPR/First Aid Training workshop session.
- To improve participants' health knowledge as well as their awareness of health related resources through participation in the Winter Workshop Series.

The 2012 Winter Workshop Series provided by the Hazelwood YMCA focused on serving parents or caregivers from the Hazelwood community with children ages 0-18. We targeted clients involved in our programs – specifically those utilizing our social service programs. In order to participate in the Workshop Series, a participant must be income eligible (i.e. at or below 250% of the federal poverty guidelines); 100% of our YMCA's current social service consumers are in fact at or below 250% of the federal poverty income guidelines. The Hazelwood Y's social service programs (including Food Bank, Emergency Food Assistance, Congregate Feeding, Tax Preparation (effective 1/29/11), Farm Stand and Energy Assistance) serve an average of 200 unduplicated heads of household each month.

The Hazelwood YMCA called upon the expertise of our fellow YMCAs as well as the expertise of our partner organizations (including NN/LM MAR) in order to instruct the individual workshop sessions offered in the Winter Workshop Series. The YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh employs several wellness directors and nutrition coaches with the credentials necessary to conduct the Nutritional Literacy for You and Your Family, Balanced Family-Friendly Meal Options, and Child and Adult CPR/First Aid sessions; we worked with our fellow Y staff in order to identify the individual YMCA team members best qualified to instruct these workshop sessions. We also looked outside of our YMCA network and utilized the expertise of our partnering organizations in order to instruct the Family Workouts session as well as to compile low-cost, healthful recipe handouts for the Balanced Family-Friendly Meal Options session and resource guides for the Information, Referral and Advocacy session. Specifically, we worked with the University of Pittsburgh Athletics Life Skills Department to assist us in the creation of a challenging and interactive Family Workouts class that taught parents or caregivers exercises and workout ideas that they can do with their kids. We also worked with Carlow University's Service Learning Department to identify college volunteers that can compile the distribution materials we will utilize in several of the workshop sessions (see Letter of Support enclosed). Finally, we also utilized our partnership with the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank to assist us with healthy cooking classes. Lydia Collins, the Consumer Health Coordinator from NN/LM MAR also provided workshop participants with a session on how to locate information on health and wellness and nutrition utilizing MedlinePlus and NIHSeniorHealth.

Pre- and post- tests indicate that the majority of participants both enjoyed the workshop series and learned a great deal about healthy eating options and nutritious cooking through participation in the program. None of the participants had been aware of MedlinePlus or NIHSeniorHealth and were pleased to have an online resource they could freely access, although many will need to do so via their local public library.

## **Minority Populations Served**

African Americans: Yes  
American Indians/Alaska Natives: No  
Asian Americans: No  
Hispanics/Latinos: Yes  
Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders: Yes  
Other: No

## **Approaches and Interventions Used**

The goals of this project as previously stated were:

- To increase participants' knowledge of basic nutritional principles and healthy meal recipes through participation in the Nutritional Literacy for You and Your Family and the Balanced Family-Friendly Meal Options workshop sessions.
- To improve participants' knowledge of family-oriented exercise and workout options through participation in the Family Workouts workshop session.
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- To improve participants' health knowledge as well as their awareness of health related resources through participation in the Winter Workshop Series.

Our timeline/steps for the program was as follows:

- December 2011: Begin advertising Winter Workshop Series to social service clientele.
- Determine appropriate instructors for all workshop sessions. Confer with instructors to determine materials/equipment needs for each workshop session;
- January 2012: Recruit and enroll 25 eligible workshop participants; administer pre-surveys to all participants. Begin work with Carlow University students to design distribution materials for the workshop sessions;
- February 2012: Host Nutritional Literacy for You and Your Family workshop session. Host Balanced Family-Friendly Meal Options workshop session;
- March 2012: Host Family Workouts workshop session; NLM Resources Training
- April 2012: Host Information, Referral and Advocacy workshop session. Host Harvest Session Dinner celebration session. Administer post-surveys.

All team members were actively engaged in the recruitment, planning, implementation and follow-up for the Winter Workshop Series. We also utilized volunteers and community partners as well. As each employee at the YMCA focuses on a different area, food assistance program, afterschool childcare, programming, financial, they were each able to provide support for this award by identifying potential participants, overseeing the invoicing, and assisting with the training of volunteers prior to programs. All team members participated in the NLM Resource Training, that was provided by Lydia Collins, NN/LM MAR Consumer Health Coordinator to members of the Greater YMCA of Pittsburgh Staff.

All handouts and resource materials were obtained through MedlinePlus or the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank.

## **Evaluation Activities**

We utilized ethnographic interviews and pre- and post- tests in order to determine the program's effectiveness. The exception was that of the CPR Class as the number of participants doubled and we were unable to afford the cost of CPR certification.

The program objective that was not met was our goal to engage 85% of participants in a CPR/First Aid certification course. As mentioned previously, we did not realize we would attract as many workshops participants as we did and the cost of small group CPR/First Aid courses became exorbitant.

## **Problems or Barriers Encountered**

The major barrier encountered by our project team was the execution of the CPR/First Aid course. Unfortunately, we were unable to implement the course simply because it became financially insoluble to conduct the number of sessions necessary to accommodate the large number of participants involved in the Winter Workshop Series. On the positive end of things, we were very happy to have a larger number of participants than we had initially envisioned.

Additionally, it was difficult for our participants to access additional materials and resources available to them because of a lack of home computers. However, they did show an interest in wanting to obtain access to MedlinePlus and other resources and were directed to their local public library for access to technology.

## **Continuation Plans**

We will continue to offer workshop series throughout the year. This summer, for instance, we will be providing another family-focused series centered on families playing and doing outdoor activities together. We have engaged a new partner in order to accomplish this goal, Venture Outdoors. As all of the YMCA Hazelwood staff had been trained on NLM's resources, we shall provide a class on accessing trusted health information online, and hope to continue this course year round.

We will utilize funds from our Y operating budget to implement this new workshop series as well as a small award received of our national YMCA office. Additionally, as we have new volunteers the YMCA Staff will train them on the health and wellness resources provided by NLM so that they can offer the training sessions or provide one on one sessions as needed since so many in the community have limited access to technology.



## Impact

This award opportunity absolutely enabled a low-resource organization to serve a high risk population. It also helped our organization meet an apparent need in our community that was previously unmet. Not only did the community members benefit from this program, but the staff members who had also been unaware of NLM Resources learned of valuable tools that can be used for our health and wellness programs at all ages served at the YMCA.

### Success Story

An older adult that attends our food bank regularly participated in all of the Winter Workshop Series sessions. Caring for five young grandchildren in his home, this gentleman was particularly interested in learning more about the types of recipes that he could prepare for his family that were low-cost and healthy. Excited that many of the recipes focused on using items received during food bank, the grandfather repeatedly returned to the Winter Workshop Series with tales of his latest cooking project using the recipes learned in class. It was wonderful to see a family utilizing the lessons learned in the program and we are excited that this grandfather and three out of five of his grandchildren will be joining us for this summer's upcoming workshop series. Additionally, as he has limited access to healthcare, he was pleased to know there are freely available resources such as MedlinePlus that he can use to find information on children's health. Although, he will need assistance in using the computer and locating the information he was pleased to know that it was available.

We have already begun sharing the success of our Winter Workshop Series with our fellow YMCAs throughout the Greater Pittsburgh region. Many of our colleagues seem very much interested in replicating this idea and we hope to be able to appropriately guide them through site-specific program development in the future.

## **Lessons Learned**

We learned through conducting this program that many of our participants started the program unaware of basic healthy eating options. Secondly, we were surprised at the number of people involved in the program who could not read or write (necessitating assistance in filling out pre and post tests, etc.).

2. We would suggest the need for extensive pre-program outreach. In addition, the need for staff members to have empathy and cultural competence is invaluable.

The most crucial strategy in program implementation was the integration of partnerships and collaborations in executing the program. Without the collaboration of our partner organizations, our Workshop Series would not have been nearly as successful.

In the future, we would require that participants sign up for the program in advance (as opposed to continuing to take participants on the first session date). This strategy would have allowed us to realize much earlier that we did not have the funding to certify all of our participants in First Aid/CPR.

This is the primary thing we would do differently moving forward.

## Other

N/A

**Attachment 1: AR summary data: Subcontractor activities**